DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 984 JC 880 408

TITLE Vancouver Community College: Final Report of the 1985/86 Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee and Report of the External Review Team.
INSTITUTION Vancouver Community Coll., British Columbia.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 59p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Planning; Community Colleges; Foreign Countries; *Institutional Evaluation; Institutional Mission; Needs Assessment; School Community Relationship; *School Effectiveness; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS Vancouver Community College BC

ABSTRACT

These two reports present the results of internal and external evaluations of Vancouver Community College (VCC). First, the self-study report identifies ways of improving the college's effectiveness, including: (1) the clarification of VCC's priorities and their relationship to external pressures and aspirations for the future; (2) the enhancement of institutional responsiveness to financial and external policy pressures; (3) increased communication with and involvement of the community; (4) the improvement of the quality of services for students and of the students using the services; and (5) the establishment of employee development as an institutional priority. A total of 73 specific recommendations for achieving these goals are provided. The assessment of the External Review Team describes the review process and then evaluates VCC with respect to accessibility to college services, the quality of course offerings, human resource development and employee orientation, program and course development and delivery, relations with the external community, internal communications, and planning, management, and decision making. Recommendations for improvement and commendations are included. (EJV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED298984

VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FINAL REPORT OF THE 1985/86 INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION STEERING COMMITTEE

AND

REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM

1986

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P. Gallagher

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

IC 880 408

VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Final Report of the 1985/86 Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee

July 8, 1986

I. INTRODUCTION:

For the past year Vancouver Community College has been conducting an internal self-study to determine how it could become a more effective centre of high quality learning for the community it serves. The process focussed on concerns, problems, and topics deemed to be most relevant by the College's internal and external constituencies. Around the seven topics reviewed by those constituents (in part by survey, in part by interviews), some common themes emerged on how to improve those things that need improving. This final report is an overview of those common themes. The Steering Committee believes such themes to be fundamental building blocks upon which the implementation of some of the more detailed recommendations can proceed with more lasting and substantive benefits.

The themes of this report may be misinterpreted as negative reflections on the current quality of the College. The results of the Self-Study indicate that the College possesses two key strengths: a high quality of instruction; and a large percentage of employees who have found V.C.C. to be a very worthwhile place to work. This report concludes that the effectiveness of V.C.C. can be improved; it does not conclude that V.C.C. is ineffective.

The single major finding is that the College needs to take a more managed and planned approach to building its future, and running its affairs. This aim will be achieved by actions to:

a) develop, manage, and communicate a vision of the College's future, and a sense of priorities, in order to give greater coherence to the College's management and planning processes;

b) improve organizational responsiveness;

c) increase the involvement of internal and external communities in the development and planning of the College's future;

d) foster excellence in the services the College provides; and

e) improve the management and availability of opportunities for employee development.

II. The Major Themes:

A. Providing a Context:

In its plans and budgets, the College's priorities are unclear. The fit between the College's internal priorities, external pressures, and aspirations for the future are even less clear. This is limiting the potential for sustaining and improving the quality of service, the pace of curricular change, and the potential value that could be derived by extending the involvement in the College of its internal and external communities.

Efforts to foster excellence, improve organizational responsiveness, and expand community involvement are required. All will give rise to a state of mass confusion, however, without efforts to develop and communicate a contexts that clarify those directions in which the College is headed. While such directions, invariably, must be sensitive to the policies of the senior governments, V.C.C. should be doing more to explore and define those directions that are a good fit to the strengths of the College, and the needs of its community. The role of the President is viewed as especially important in this regard.

It is recommended that:

1. the President put before the entire College community his vision of the College's future, the factors likely to affect that future, and his expectations of all members of the college community in contributing to the successful implementation of that vision.

2. the vision communicated include initiatives to:

   a) exploit V.C.C.'s advantages as a large college with a broad range of programs;

   b) foster innovation and development at the department level;

   c) challenge the College community to reflect on the College's future;

   d) give to all levels of the College the responsibility and authority to fulfill the tasks that have been assigned to them;

   e) finance, from available revenue sources, the College's priorities for its development, and the improvement of the services it provides.

3. the vision communicated include specific challenges to the V.C.C. community to:

   a) improve the utlization of existing instructional space;

   b) review future space requirements in light of the anticipated losses of C.E.I.C. vocational seat purchases, and the training demand which can be expected from post-EXPO housing construction in proximity to the V.V.I. campus;

   c) review and expand the role of computer-based and computer managed, non-conventional learning;

   d) act on the long term implications of the community's call for more general education;

e) review the appropriateness of existing internal priorities, in light of external pressures such as technological change and recent shortages of development funds (such as capital and curriculum development);

f) explore the appropriateness of, and demand for, post-basic, post-certificate, and/or post-diploma instruction;

g) re-assign funds to cover the costs of keeping programs, and employees affected by technological change, current;

h) encourage the maintenance and growth of co-operative education programming;

i) identify opportunities to diversify the College's sources of revenue, and the types of priorities which each source of revenue ought, most properly, be used to finance;

j) address the balance of traditional vs. non-traditional class time availability, in light of its effects on access for growing non-traditional student populations.

With regard to Recommendation 3 the Committee believes the corresponding calls in the Subcommittee reports for more specific actions to be largely well founded. Action on such items, however, should be implemented as a natural part of the College's on-going processes to explore, define and communicate priorities, plan actions on priorities, and finance those that require financing from appropriate revenue sources.

Here, and elsewhere, the Committee advocates that the solutions to be implemented should be internalized, and implemented largely through existing structures and employees.

Some have argued that the College is too large to be effective and should be sub-divided into separate entities. Others have advocated that the College become a single monolithic whole. The Committee believes that the answer lies somewhere in between. The key will be to find ways of capitalizing on the strengths of being large and comprehensive, while organizing the management of College affairs in a way that exploits the creative potential of the organization.

While the Committee believes the solutions in this area will require, primarily, efforts to improve the effectiveness of management, not the appropriateness of one structural option vs. another, there are some structure-related solutions arising from the Study. These are largely ones that could, and should, be accomodated in any College structure. It is recommended that:

4. Instructional computing support services be enhanced, as advocated in the Instructional Computing report.

5. the reporting relationship of the Computer Services department be re-examined in light of its developing and growing instructional support role.

6. the role and range of authority of Division Chairman positions be examined.

7. the gains and losses which might result from the movement of Deans, Division Chairmen, and other managers be examined.

8. the gains and losses which might result from cross-centre appointments for Deans and Division Chairmen be examined.

9. the College President undertake a thorough review of the structure and role of the College Executive Committee (C.E.C.). Such a review should include considerations such as whether or not there should be two bodies (one instructional, one administrative); how best to ensure that decisions include a cross-centre perspective to counter natural parochialism; and how the perceived emphasis of the C.E.C.'s deliberations might be shifted from that of monitoring the activities of the parts to leading the mission of the whole.

B. Organizational Responsiveness:

In the balance of organizational rigidity vs. responsiveness, the College is too rigid for the kind of financial and external policy pressures it faces in the short term, and expects to face in the medium to longer term. Fundamental shifts in the types of funding available to the College, the types of students attracted, and the economic growth potential of the province (to name a few) require that the College be responsive and organized in its responses to an extent far greater than at any other period in its history. There is an irony in the observations made in the Interim Report that, despite its rigid, hierarchical, highly controlled decision structure, the College has operated in a way in which:

> "(some) responsible managers (perceive) ... that they ... have no control over their areas of responsibility."

Increased responsiveness, not increased reactiveness, is advocated. The College's capacity to produce new program or project proposals, for instance, is of less concern than its capacity to balance community need, internal priorities, and institutional expertise in producing well conceived proposals that are a good fit to where the College is heading. As noted in the Interim Report:

> "(the College) is over-administered and under-led, and its activities are over-monitored and under-planned ... Time and again employees expressed concerns that what was termed 'planning' in the College was reactive and incremental rather than proactive and visionary."

The Committee believes this finding to be representative, and symptomatic. While actions to identify and communicate contexts within which the College's responsiveness is to be fostered will be important, they alone will not suffice. Clarity of the goals is one thing; fostering the creativity and innovation required to achieve them is another.

The Committee believes the demand for increased responsiveness is the product of a continuing, fundamental shift in the service expectations of the external community. As external market factors continue to have an increasing effect on the College, there is a need for its approach to the delivery and quality of services to be more "market sensitive". Part of this requires that the College de-bureaucratize its services to those who come to the College (or one of its departments) looking for service. While there may be excellent bureaucratic reasons why something cannot be done, it is imperative that ways be found to do it if the result would be a significant improvement in the availability and/or quality of services the College provides.

While there is a need for improved service to students, and prospective students, there is evidence that there is an equal need within the College for improved relations between operating departments. Be it a potential new course idea, advocacy that registration procedures be streamlined, or an enquiry about available course offerings, part of the improved responsiveness advocated requires a shift in attitude that emphasizes the resolution of problems, rather than explanations of why they exist.

The Committee believes that added responsiveness requires fundamental shifts in collective attitude; new types of information and advice for managers; new approaches to pricing and points of first contact; collaborative arrangements with industry; and internal incentives to encourage development. It is recommended that:

a) On collective attitude:

10. administrators throughout the College be advised to foster an attitude encouraging innovative thought, and receive proposals for program and course developments in a positive and cooperative manner.

11. the Langara management review the additional steps that might be taken to improve the responsiveness of the campus in building and implementing new initiatives that are a good fit to the strengths of the campus and development priorities of the College.

b) On Information:

12. information on student markets, demand for programs, shifts in training needs, and student satisfaction be disseminated widely within the College, and used in assessing proposed, new, and existing programs (as appropriate).

c) On Pricing and Points of First Contact:

13. methods be developed for the introduction of more market sensitive tuition fees and selective additional discounting through enhanced financial aid ... the latter to be targeted at those students not eligible for student loans and other existing sources of financial aid.

14. there be a recognition of the importance of support staff in assisting new students accessing the College and that resources, including staff development, be provided to ensure the quality of services to new students.

15. the management of waitlists, especially at Vancouver Vocational Institute, be improved so that students on such lists will be treated in a just and equitable manner.

16. registration procedures be improved and simplified, including consideration of:

- a capacity for multi campus registration (similar to the Vancouver Ticket Centre's/Concert Box Office's ability to determine seat availability).

- some incentive for early registration (e.g., a reduced fee, or coupon entitling reduction at the Bookstore, or fee deferral policy, etc.).

17. the availability of pre-registration information be enhanced, including:

- the establishment of a central information bureau with properly trained and informed personnel;

- methods for the communication of course and program information or changes immediately to all personnel dealing with the public; and

- a mechanism whereby potential students can obtain counselling and pre-register at any time during the year.

18. the availability of course information over the telephone be improved. Specifically, that:

    - the number of phone lines be increased during registration (e.g., additional temporary lines, such as those used in fund raising telethons), and tape recordings be used for registrants who wish to leave their names and phone numbers for call back; and

    - there be consideration of the feasibility of manning telephones for longer hours during the week and on weekends.

d) On Collaboration with Industry:

19. the College actively pursue some highly visible collaborative arrangements for state-of-the-art training with companies in order to encourage other firms in the Vancouver area to such mutually beneficial collaboration.

20. in view of the new Federal policy vis-a-vis the Canadian Jobs Strategy (C.J.S.), V.C.C. make a concerted effort to contact employers in order to negotiate training contracts which would attract federal funding.

21. Program Advisory Committee members, both present and past, be used to promote collaboration between industry and the College. and the negotation of training contracts.

22. faculty be encouraged to participate in the generation of prospective business and related curriculum development. Such activity could perhaps be undertaken during professional development time.

e) On Internal Incentives:

23. funds be raised and set aside to fund program development projects, in keeping with the spirit of the Subcommittee reports, as part of the development of institutional priorities.

24. the College institute a procedure for creating ad hoc project teams to manage and facilitate each approved program through to its establishment ... Such teams shall be comprised of people representing relevant areas of expertise and responsibility (e.g., curriculum, space, equipment, market research, publicity) and the appropriate College Division.

The Committee believes, in addition, that improving the type, quantity, and quality of advice the College receives from its external community is critical to ensuring responsiveness. Various types of ad hoc, cross-College Advisory Committee were recommended in four separate parts of the Subcommittee reports. The Committee is unclear on the answer to this need. One option would be to create a blue ribbon committee of selected Program Advisory Committee members. Another would be to create one such group for each broad program area (Business, Health, etc.). Concerns exist over the resources required to effectively support either type of initiative. It is recommended that:

25. a means be found to establish a committee, some committees, or a process, to involve selected existing Program Advisory Committee members, potentially supplemented by others, in the provision of advise to the College on community, rather than program, affairs ... and that the exploration of options include the active involvement of the College Board.

C. Involvement of the Community:

The Committee believes that it is incumbent upon all those with a stake in the College to be involved in a regular process of defining, refining, and communicating the collective vision of where the College is headed, and how it hopes to get there. This and other actions to increase the involvement of the College community (both internal and external) in the development, management, and planning of College futures will be critical to enhancing organizational responsiveness.

Improving the responsiveness of existing decision processes to the types of information those processes now receive will, however, not suffice, because of the College's hierarchical, and sometimes limited, flow of ideas and information. There is a need to reach out, more, for some of the answers. Whether it be the College Executive Committee, the campus management committees, the Board, Central Administration, the campuses, or any other discernable internal organizational entity, the College has more potential, and need, for shared perspectives in shaping its future than it has chosen to exploit or recognize. If portions of the College continue to attempt to "go it alone" in finding the solutions, the College risks being less inventive and resourceful than it could be. The costs of failing to reach out into the organization for answers to questions faced by the College were noted in the Interim Report:

"first, management is deprived of the advantage of the perspectives which might be brought to bear by affected employees; and second, it makes it too easy for managers to attribute responsibility for difficult or unpleasant decisions to some third party scape-goat."

Program Advisory Committee members, in general, share some of the frustrations:

> "(members feel) that they are being used as a device to suggest credibility due to their participation but in truth, feel that they have no participation and no input."

There is a need to increase internal and external community involvement, by actions which will: improve communication of the issues being discussed, and potential solutions, at various levels of the College's decision structure; change the scheduling and style of meetings to encourage, rather than limit, the opportunities for sharing perspectives (including cross-centre ones); improve orientation of Program Advisory Committee members, and improve deployment of their advising potential; and improve the College's presence in the community. It is recommended that:

a) On Communications:

26. the agendas of upcoming centre management, College Executive, and College Board committee meetings be distributed, in advance, to all managers to the Division Chairmen level, all director levels in administrative positions and the faculty/instructor association executives. It is suggested the weekly centre news letters be used for this purpose.

27. a summary of the decisions made by these same committees be distributed in the same way following the meetings.

28. committee members be encouraged to bring to their meetings resource people who will be affected by, or have insights to offer into the effects of, decisions to be made.

29. the Continuing Education Division institute a weekly newsletter.

30. there be an annual program planning report required of all departments done in light of the context, outlined by the President as a means of clarifying and communicating priorities (both up and down the College's decision structure), with linkages to the College's on-going planning and budgeting processes.

31. campus administrators, from principals to division chairs, make annual commitments to spend time with and/or in each of the instructional areas of the campus.

b) On Meetings:

32. the instructional divisions build into their timetables a time period to permit department and division meetings.

33. periodic cross-centre meetings be organized for three specific purposes: to permit faculty in similar disciplines to share concerns and opportunities; to improve service division and instructional division understandings of their respective activities and requests; and to renew a collective sense of institutional purpose and role.

34. that administrators maintain certain core hours so that they are more easily accessible.

35. the King Edward Campus and Vancouver Vocational Institute management review additional steps that might be taken to improve the involvement of their constituents in the management of their respective centres.

c) On Program Advisory Committees:

36. ideas for improving the orientation, clarifying the role, and broadening the involvement of Program Advisory Committee members, in the spirit of those outlined in the interim report, be implemented.

37. the monthly President's Report to the Board, or a re-packaged version of it, be distributed to Program Advisory Committee members.

d) On Community Presence:

38. the College Board recommend to the Ministry of Post Secondary Education, that in deciding on future additions to its membership, the Ministry should consider appointing persons who would round out the present board membership with personal backgrounds related more to the diverse social, economic and cultural groups within the College's region.

39. College administrators and Board members be encouraged to increase their public visibility.

40. a marketing strategy for the College be developed (as another means of increasing the visibility of the College in the community), recognizing that the effectiveness of the strategy will be largely dependent on the quality of the College's instruction and community need for its programs.

D. Accessing Quality Services:

While the ideal of maximizing accessibility is generally shared by employees and students, many feel that greater attention needs to be paid to the quality of services for students, and the quality of students using those services. Improvements in these areas are fundamental. Rising costs to students attending the College give rise to increased expectations of value. Improved value must be fostered, demonstrable, and demonstrated. The Committee believes this will require regular evaluations of instructional program areas for which such evaluations are not now being conducted, the development of regular support service evaluations, and improved and expanded evaluations of all employees. All three will provide greater internal accountability for the quality of service, aid the on-going process of establishing internal accountability for the quality of service, and aid the on-going process of establishing internal priorities for institutional improvement (including the place of employee development in those priorities).

It is recommended that:

41. a planned 3-5 year schedule of instructional program reviews be approved, with linkages to the annual department plans advocated above as part of the on-going internal planning and budgeting process.

42. the existing instructional review process be modified to focus on the development of a 3-5 year plan for the improvement of each program reviewed and include substantially more department faculty involvement in the process.

43. a planned 5 year schedule of support service area be approved with linkages to the annual department plans advocated above as part of the on-going internal planning and budgeting cycle.

44. the process of support service reviews be pilot-tested by a newly constituted standing subcommittee of the College Executive Committee, include feedback from users on the effectiveness of the department's services, and be modified, as appropriate, based on the results of pilot-testing.

45. the College implement a program for evaluating, annually, the performance of all administrative managers and support staff. The committee understands that training will be required for supervisors to conduct ongoing evaluations effectively. The recommendation should be considered in conjunction with Recommendation 62.

46. College management and faculty associations review, in concert, the processes for evaluation of teaching faculty.

47. all instructors on continuing appointments be evaluated on a regular basis (every second year).

48. the policies and procedures established for instructor evaluation be communicated clearly and effectively to all faculty. Specifically, that:

    - College Management and Faculty Association jointly communicate to faculty, clearly and effectively, the difference between Evaluation of Regular Instructors in accordance with the Collective Agreement and College/Campus Policy on Evaluation of Instructors.

    - Policies on Instructor Evaluation which are already in place be followed, not ignored.

    - Policies on Instructor Evaluation be written, revised as needed, and put into practice on a regular and required basis, not on an optional basis.

In addition to improved evaluation, an effort must be made to improve the match between the academic and vocational prepareness of students admitted, and the course of studies to which they are admitted. There is a widespread opinion that many places are filled by students who are underprepared and uncommitted while some qualified students are turned away. The problem is endemic, especially given the large number of borderline learners and non-English speakers the College traditionally serves. It is recommended that:

49. the College screen all applicants for basic literacy and numeracy skills.

50. the College provide, during the registration or pre-registration process, more individual counselling with regard to realistic course loads.

51. the College establish, and staff, learning skills centres with self-teaching facilities at each campus to provide students who are deficient in basic language, mathematics, and typing skills with extracurricular opportunities to improve their basic skills.

The centrality of quality support services to the excellence of the learning enterprise needs re-affirmation in the establishment of internal priorities ... and there is a need for improvements in support services beyond those outlined above. Student recruitment, instructional computing, and Public Relations are three specific areas.

There is a concern that the recruitment of students--particularly those new entrants to the labour force who are graduating from high school--could be more effective if it were made more informative. It is recommended that:

52. more sessions be held with secondary school counsellors to familiarize them with V.C.C. programs.

53. regular mailings of course information be made to all secondary school counsellors and other interested groups.

54. there be more presentations by College instructors to high school students about the College's offerings. These could take place at the secondary school or at the College's Open Houses.

55. during orientation sessions with prospective students, there be a better explanation of the skills required at the College level (i.e., reading, comprehension, grammar and studying).

Instructional computing capacity is still inadequate to support the further integration of computing into the curricula which faculty believed was required two years ago. It is recommended that:

56. analyses of the need for, and amount of, integration of computing into the curriculum be a required part of the annual program plan submitted by each department as part of the on-going planning and budgeting cycle.

57. progress towards implementing the recommendations of the 1984 Instructional Computing Report, to extend the integration of computing into the curriculum, be assessed annually as part of developing the overall context within which program planning is to occur.

Where possible, the College needs to take advantage of pooled external resources, and opportunities for such pooling.

It is recommended that:

58. V.C.C. cooperate in developing formal relationships with other colleges and institutes in the Lower Mainland with the objective of: planning the establishment of curriculum areas of concentration for advanced technology training; and sharing the development of microtechnology resources where overlapping programs are necessary.

59. the College should urge the Ministry of Post Secondary Education to require the Provincial Education Media Centre to devote more time and money to the acquisition of copyrights to audio-visual materials needed to promote program and course development at post-secondary institutions.

Improvements in the services provided by the Public Relations Department have been widely called for. The development plan which the College needs in this area is being developed, through the department, with the guidance and assistance of redeveloped centre advertising committees. The Committee believes this to be consistent with its call for implementation via existing structures, and the clear need for improvements in this area. Contrary to the findings of the Interim Report, however, the Committee believes that the effectiveness of recruiting students from sources other than the secondary schools will be dependent upon program reputations, built on quality--not on the extent of advertising. In addition, the Committee believes the College, initially, should not retain an external organization to audit its communications requirements and to recommend solutions. Actions being taken by the Department and actions arising from the Institutional Evaluation to improve internal and external communications ought, first, to be given the opportunity to internalize the solutions before, as a "fall-back" position, the use of an external consultant is considered. The Committee believes, equally strongly, that the College ought not to wait for 3 to 5 years for internal initiatives to show some improvements in this area. The Committee recommends that:

60. an external communications consultant be retained if improvements in communications begin to slow (or fail to show) within a year.

As a housekeeping item, the Committee concurs with the finding of the Interim Report that:

61. the uniformity of instructor selection procedures be improved by conforming, at all centres, to the process outlined in the Langara Faculty association Agreement (1985/86, Article 10.2).

E. Employee Development:

Employee development at any time in the College's history ought to be a major priority. It is simply not good management in an organization so heavily dependent on human resources not to make a considerable investment in their improvement, development and growth.

At a time when the College seeks to foster innovation and excellence, employee development becomes especially important. A major stimulus to innovation is provided when employees are given the opportunity to expand their knowledge, learn new skills, and upgrade old ones. The Committee believes that the most crucial factors leading to the creation of such opportunities are the availability of time and the encouragement offered by colleagues and those in authority.

More than just improving the skills of those with a long standing and continued place in the College, the College should establish "support net" policies, including the provision of re-training opportunities, for those whose jobs are, or could be, affected by shifts in the College's priorities. None of the initiatives the Committee advocates ought to preclude a continuing desire to see the College sustain its reputation as a fair employer.

It is recommended that:

62. the College identify a percentage figure of its budget and allocate it to a professional development fund with clear public guidelines as to how to access those funds, what amounts are deemed reasonable under different circumstances, what lead time is expected between application and confirmation of funds, and so on.

63. the College immediately identify a set of skills necessary for the various administrative, instructional, and support functions within the College, and institute a program for developing those skills. Such skills should include: basic report writing; how to conduct meetings; how to read, understand and prepare budgets; supervisory skills; time management skills; and so on.

64. the College provide support staff paid time in order to update and upgrade their skills, and to learn new skills, particularly those related to computer awareness, through training courses, workshops, and conferences directly related to their skills and expertise.

65. the College prepare handbooks for instructors and staff, outlining incentives and opportunities for further training and development, and list external funding sources to assist with such development.

66. the College establish, where appropriate, in each division of each campus a Professional Development Committee, consisting of elected faculty members, to review periodically with each instructor his or her strengths, weaknesses, and goals, and to help the instructor draw up an action plan for his or her professional development time, so that such time will be of maximum use.

67. in the event that the establishment of a new program necessitates the displacement or cancellation of an existing program, the College provide affected employees with adequate warning prior to the change and should assist them with retraining and/or relocation.

68. the College negotiate with the universities, institutes, and other colleges of British Columbia a reciprocal agreement for the retraining, at minimal cost, of employees threatened with displacement.

Another aspect of employee development, and one in which the College's efforts continue to falter, is employee orientation. While a lack of orientation creates on-the-job inefficiencies (by people not knowing how to go about dealing with various problems), and limits employee communications, it also limits the effectiveness with which employees can represent the College. This is a serious wastage of one of the College's greatest potential strengths: the size and talent of its workforce. Orientation issues were identified in the 1978 Institutional Evaluation as priorities, and actions were supposedly taken. It is recommended that:

69. the College develop an orientation package describing the College, its constituent parts, its scale, its range of offerings, its contribution to the community, and its role in the education system. This information should be given to all employees regardless of their role at the time of their joining the College.

70. the College develop a process of orientation for all employees embarking on new functions, an orientation particularly related to those functions of the College with which the employee will be expected to deal.

71. there be an internal commitment--by the senior management in all divisions--to better inform all employees about the total College story, instead of just the smaller part which applies to their particular centre. This could include such items as: clearer information on procedures regarding program changes; and training of mid-level managers in the more important administrative processes.

72. all College employees receive a thorough orientation in the College's activities and programs. Special training should be provided to those employees who have direct contact with the public. Such training should include communications skills, handling people with handicaps or who speak poor English, and sensitivity towards the public, particularly those of different cultures.

Excellence in the performance of job duties, the development of new skills, or contributions to the development of innovative ideas are not new concepts at the College, but they have been largely unrecognized and undervalued. Public recognition of instructional and other forms of excellence and creativity needs to occur. It would do much to improve faculty morale, and serve as a signal of the importance of excellence in the priorities of the College. It is recommended that:

73. the College institute on each campus annual faculty conferences to honour a "Teacher of the Year" and to provide speakers and workshops on matters of concern to instructors.

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS:

Those who served on the various self-study subcommittees, responded to the various surveys conducted, or took time out from their schedule to be interviewed or attend various public sessions to discuss the Interim Report, demonstrated an internal fortitude within the College to address fundamental issues, and an ability to do so in a frank and open way. The Steering Committee believes these attributes typify intangible, and often overlooked, strengths of the College. It believes, further that they are evidence of an underlying potential for the College, and its various components, to achieve significant institutional improvements ... to the benefit of all those associated with the College, or reliant on it for quality services.

Background Papers

1. V.C.C., Institutional Evaluation Interim Report, April 1986

2. V.C.C., Institutional Evaluation Subcommittee Reports and Background Information, March 1986

3. V.C.C., Minutes of the Roundtable Discussions of May 22, 26, and 28, 1986

4. V.C.C., Minutes of the Public Forums of April 28, 1986, May 8, 15, and 20, 1986

5. V.C.C., Results of the Surveys of Employees, Students, and Program Advisory Committee Members, January 1986

6. V.C.C., A Summary of the Background, Organization, and Current State of the Institutional Evaluation, September 1985

REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM

VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

October, 1986

REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM

I am pleased to provide to you the report of the External Review Team that visited us in mid-October. This report should be viewed as a companion document to our own Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee Report, which was widely distributed in July 1986.

The next and important stage in the full institutional evaluation process is the implementation of actions arising out of recommendations contained in these reports. Although preliminary actions have already been taken, you should anticipate that this implementation stage will get underway in earnest early in 1987. As well, it is my intention to keep track of, and report regularly to you on, progress in implementing the recommendations.

Paul Gallagher
President

December 4, 1986

EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
October 14-17, 1986

Dr. Donna J. Allan
Academic Vice-President
Red Deer College

Dr. Barbara Daum, President
North Seattle Community College

Dr. Myrna L. Greene, Director
Education Research, Evaluation and Development Centre
University of Lethbridge

Mr. John Hatchett, Director
Education and Training Centre
B.C. Telephone Company

Mr. Roy Lindsay, Vice-President
Administrative Services
Portland Community College

Dr. Gordon McIntosh, Professor
Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
University of Alberta

Mr. John Meagher, Director — Chairman
Liberal and Applied Arts Division
Camosun College

Dr. Jeannette Nicholls, Director
Learning and Marketing Services
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

Mr. Earle Rochon, Personnel Manager
Ebco Industries, Richmond, B.C.

Mr. Casey Sheridan, Coordinator
Business Administration Programs
Fraser Valley College

Mr. Barry Snowden
Vice-President, Administration
Grant MacEwan Community College

Mr. Grant Spitz
Vice-President, Human Resources
Bank of British Columbia

EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
The Review Process	3
CHAPTER	
1 ACCESSIBILITY TO COLLEGE SERVICES	4
1.1 Introduction	4
1.2 Method	4
1.3 Findings	4
1.4 Recommendations	5
1.5 Commendations	5
2 QUALITY OF OFFERINGS	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Method	6
2.3 Findings	6
2.4 Recommendations	9
3 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE ORIENTA	10
3.1 Introduction	10
3.2 Method	10
3.3 Findings	10
3.4 Recommendations	12
3.5 Human Resource Development Policy - Sample	12
4 PROGRAM AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY	14
4.1 Introduction	14
4.2 Method	14
4.3 Findings	15
4.4 Recommendations	17
4.5 Commendations	17

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont'd.)

	Page
5 RELATIONS WITH THE EXTERNAL COMMUNITY	19
5.1 Introduction	19
5.2 Method	19
5.3 Findings	19
5.4 Recommendations	21
5.5 Commendations	21
6 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	22
6.1 Introduction	22
6.2 Method	22
6.3 Findings	22
6.4 Recommendations	24
7 PLANNING, MANAGING AND DECISION MAKING	26
7.1 Introduction	26
7.2 Method	26
7.3 Findings	26
7.4 Recommendations	28
7.5 Commendations	29
SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS	30

Introduction

Vancouver Community College has focused its second Institutional Evaluation on major internal issues identified by the college community as requiring most urgent attention. Throughout its review, the institution addressed the following five broad topic areas:

1) college community relations,
2) aspects of access,
3) program and course development,
4) quality of offerings,
5) decision making, managing, planning, and staff development.

In addition to striking committees to review these five areas, the Evaluation Steering Committee formed two additional committees to review specific topics called for in the guidelines established by the Council of Principals, namely, the processes that have been established for ongoing evaluation of instructional programs and support services. The findings of these seven committees were ultimately summarized in the final report of the 1985/86 Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee (July 8, 1986). The recommendations contained in the final report, or more specifically, the issues addressed by these recommendations, became the focus of the External Team's review.

The design of the institution's study and the findings and recommendations are described in detail in the widely distributed Interim Report (April, 1986) and will not be repeated here. The External Team would, however, like to offer the following general observations about the process:

1. The major issues approach appears to have been a wise choice at this particular point in the College's development, for it has given the institutional review a pragmatic focus that was probably essential if people were to see the exercise as being meaningful.

2. The overall participation in terms of responses to questionnaires and involvement in interviews and public meetings was disappointing, but appears to have provided sufficient data on which to base sound conclusions.

3. Notwithstanding comment number two, the Steering Committee is to be commended for its efforts to provide opportunities for participation and to encourage all members of the college community to become involved actively in the process.

4. The Chief Executive Officer's obvious support for the whole process of institutional review and for the planning process itself is felt by the Team to have been a major factor in contributing to a constructive Self Study and External Review.

5. Although the Team had the impression that the information about the external visit was not widely, or perhaps more accurately, not effectively distributed, the on-site cooperation was enthusiastic and people went out of their way to accommodate last-minute arrangements for interviews. So while Team members sensed that many other people might have made arrangements to see them if they had had more notice (this was mentioned frequently by people who learned at the last minute that people were on campus and available), the Team still managed to meet with close to 300 people during their visit and to get the views of a broad cross-section of the college community.

The dominant impression formed by the External Team was that the Institutional Evaluation has in fact addressed major issues in a direct and honest fashion. A genuine interest in making the Study worthwhile and perhaps using the audit itself as a catalyst for action pervaded the interviews conducted by the Team. In addition, a sincere desire to make the review process as constructive as possible and to use the Study as a foundation upon which the institution can develop its Strategic Plan was voiced by the Board chairman and members of her committee on Institutional Review. By far the majority of employees interviewed appeared to take pride in their work, and if they expressed a desire for change in certain areas, it was change that would allow them to do their jobs better. Overall, VCC struck the Team as being a healthy and effective institution.

The College has itself identified the areas it would most like to improve and has begun to formulate strategies for dealing with specific challenges. As is always the case in a lengthy review process of this nature, change begins to occur almost immediately, and it is encouraging to note that many positive steps have already been taken on recommendations made in the internal report. The External Team formed the strong impression that the College is at a critical and exciting stage in its development. VCC faces many very real challenges in its efforts to become an even better college, but the potential and the determination to face those challenges successfully was certainly in evidence during the External Team's visit.

The Review Process

In order to validate the findings of the internal review, the External Team assigned members to review the following areas of the College's operation:

1. accessibility of services provided by the institution
2. procedures in place for ensuring that quality is maintained in courses and programs
3. opportunities for human resource development and procedures for employee orientation
4. procedures for program and course development
5. relations with the external community
6. internal communications
7. administration/management: goal setting, planning, decision making.

What follows is a summary of the reports on these seven areas. Each section contains a brief description of how the task was defined, the process followed in conducting the review, and findings and recommendations. In some instances, special commendations are also made, but these have been kept to a minimum for brevity's sake--certainly not for lack of opportunities to single out special effort and achievement. Assuming that the institution will probably wish to pull out the major recommendations of the external report for purposes of quick reference, a separate list is included. The Review Team's recommendations are, however, best considered in the context of the particular area being reviewed, and in most instances are affirmations of directions already set out in the internal report.

This report is submitted in the sincere hope that the observations and recommendations it contains will be of assistance to the institution as it proceeds with the development and implementation of its Strategic Educational Plan.

1 ACCESSIBILITY TO COLLEGE SERVICES

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to review the issues and recommendations of the Self Study as they relate to student access to the College. The particular services of the College which were studied in order to review the issues were admissions, registration, counselling, advising, financial aid, information, services to special populations, and physical plant services.

1.2 Method

The method of review consisted of analyzing the Self Study Report issues and recommendations, noting those that appeared to have implications for access, discussing those items with a broad cross-section of personnel responsible for providing student support services, and attempting to validate or invalidate the issues or recommendations for that segment of services. Interviews were conducted with eighteen staff members and four student representatives.

1.3 Findings

1.3.1 Although closer communication between and among Student Services segments on some campuses would improve accessibility, students do get admitted, registered and placed expeditiously.

1.3.2 The issue of centralization-decentralization does not significantly impair accessibility under present student markets and funding; however, if the student markets and funding decrease, centralization and computerization of certain Student Services may be indicated.

1.3.3 Although campus programs have unique features and formats, they also have enough similarities to indicate that intercampus study of processes that work well for individual campuses would be beneficial.

1.3.4 The need for new approaches to pricing was not confirmed in the interviews, but the College should continue to monitor the impact of higher fees on student enrolment, particularly in the

area of accessing programs like ELT or Adult Basic Education.

1.3.5 A more systematic involvement of support services staff in the planning process is indicated, so that services will be ready when the plans are implemented.

1.3.6 A training program for service staff who deal with the crush of students at the peak periods of student processing would be beneficial.

1.3.7 There is a strong need for coordination of financial aid services for the total College.

1.3.8 A thorough assessment of the demands of entrepreneurial projects on student support services--at the time when the projects are being considered--would aid decision making at the initial stages and enable better response from services.

1.3.9 A marketing program to build a strong image for Vancouver Community College with attention to the strengths of each campus's offerings would improve access to the College.

1.3.10 The recommendation that a systematic evaluation of student support services components be implemented appears to have strong support.

1.4 Recommendations

That the College address the needs indicated in the findings, prioritize the appropriate actions, adopt a schedule of implementation, and make the Plan known throughout the College.

1.5 Commendations

1.5.1 Strong individual leaders in the student support services on each campus.

1.5.2 An enthusiastic staff which keeps the inconveniences of accessing the system to a minimum.

1.5.3 An evidence of pride in doing a good job and a pride in each campus operation.

1.5.4 An attitude on the part of staff who see themselves as being advocates for students rather than implementers of processes and procedures.

2 QUALITY OF OFFERINGS

2.1 Introduction

The particular focus of this report is the work of the Subcommittee on the Quality of Offerings and the Instructional Program Evaluation Process Verification Committee. The first of these committees was one of the five created to address issues identified in the initial phase of the Institutional Self Study. This committee consisted of representatives from all three campuses, and from administration, faculty and staff. Its report was based on the responses to three main questions on the large survey administered to faculty, staff and students in the fall of 1985. The committee did not conduct formal interviews but made itself available to anyone wanting input.

The Program Evaluation Process Verification Committee was one mandated by the college review process. This six-person committee, representing the three campuses, reviewed the program evaluation review process and prepared a number of recommendations.

2.2 Method

The findings and recommendations in this report are based on the Institutional Self Study final report, the interim reports of the subcommittees, other documents provided by staff, and interviews with 29 people, including five senior administrators (deans), 16 faculty (10 of whom had some administrative responsibilities) and 8 support staff.

The interviews focused primarily on the issues of faculty, staff and administrator evaluations, course and program evaluation, quality of support services, and the quality of students admitted to the programs. Primarily these were the issues addressed in Recommendations 41 to 51 of the Steering Committee's final report.

2.3 Findings

The quality of offerings appears to be a major theme for all employees. The desire for quality is readily apparent, and there was general support for many of the recommendations in the report. Major issues appear to have been addressed, and there has been ample opportunity for input. There seems to be

a great sense of optimism, coupled with some skepticism that nothing will come of the Study.

The quality of offerings issue, however, seems secondary to, or at least partly dependent upon, resolving other issues. For example, in order for quality of offerings issues to be profitably addressed, it may be necessary first to determine and clearly convey the "mission" or philosophy of the College, and to resolve concerns relative to leadership and administration.

However, there were some specific findings relative to the quality of offerings.

Personnel Evaluation

2.3.1 The committee concurs with the conclusion that there is a considerable lack of and need for regular evaluations of permanent faculty, staff, and administrators. There would also appear to be widespread support for the related recommendations of the Summary Report. However, this support seems to be based on personal and individual and widely divergent assumptions about the purposes of evaluation (e.g., to weed out weak personnel? to improve instruction?), and about the form such evaluations would take. It is the Committee's perception that this process is likely to require a great deal more time, effort, sensitivity and commitment than is generally anticipated.

2.3.2 The committee also concurs with the recommendations regarding staff and professional development. However, there appears to be a significant gap here in that the relationship between evaluation and staff development has not been addressed. Evaluation that serves no useful purpose creates more problems than it cures.

2.3.3 The issue of "unionism versus professionalism" was raised on occasion. And while professionalism seemed to overrule all else, there was some feeling that unions and/or collective agreements can militate against effective staff deployment and staff development, particularly where positions are based on seniority.

Course and Program Evaluation

2.3.4 There appear to be wide discrepancies in knowledge about, and implementation of, the course and program review processes. There are programs which have not been reviewed in more than 12 years. The process often does not address the curriculum; nor does it assess the extent to which instructional materials are adequate. Recommendations 41 and 42 of the final report appear to have been addressed in part by the Subcommittee on the Program Evaluation Review Process, but this has not yet been communicated to departments.

Quality of Students

2.3.5 Generally, the Team concurs that the quality of students entering specific programs could be enhanced with more emphasis on initial assessment and upgrading. This appears to be a readily implementable recommendation at VCC because of the many remedial programs available.

2.3.6 In "professional" programs and those relying on outside placements, there is a strong need for faculty to have input into the student selection process.

Support Services

2.3.7 There is general agreement that there has been a decline in the quality of support services, but there is much less agreement about appropriate solutions. There is a strong commitment to providing services and programs (except in C.E. where it may not be feasible) even if it means extra work, creative solutions, etc.--as long as everyone is doing it. However, there is also a recognition that there is a breaking point and that good will may turn to frustration, anger, illness or simply minimal effort. The concern for people, and the recognition of the value of human resources must be more than rhetoric.

2.3.8 There is considerable feeling among the support staff that their contribution is less valued than that of other employees.

2.4 Recommendations

2.4.1 Procedures to implement regular faculty, staff and administrator evaluation (Recommendations 45-47) should be initiated, but with considerable planning and attention to differences among campuses.

2.4.2 Procedures for employee evaluation should be clearly aimed at the improvement of performance and therefore should be related to recommendations regarding staff development and deployment.

2.4.3 Revised procedures for program evaluation should be clearly communicated to all departments and should be implemented. This process should be monitored, perhaps by the Verification Committee, to determine its effectiveness.

2.4.4 Greater efforts should be made to recognize the value of support staff contributions to the College.

3 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

3.1 Introduction

The Self Study identified that employee development "ought to be a major priority." The recommendations of the Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee provided the focus for the portion of the External Review directed at employee development. The information gathered was directed at the validity of these recommendations and at ensuring that the total spectrum of faculty, staff and administration concerns were reflected in the Self Study.

3.2 Method

Interviews were conducted with representatives of the Langara Faculty Association, the Vocational Instructors Association, the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union, and the Administrator's Association. Further discussions were held with faculty, divisional chairmen, deans, librarians, administrators and the College President. The interview format was a series of open questions directed towards existing practices as they relate to orientation; staff and professional development, and their link with budget decisions; performance evaluation; and human resource development systems.

3.3 Findings

Orientation

3.3.1 Orientation is decentralized. The processes vary by campus and department.

3.3.2 There are no human resource orientation guidelines nor handbook.

3.3.3 Langara has an informal "mentoring" system.

3.3.4 A few department chairmen and the librarians have developed their own orientation process.

3.3.5 In general, orientation of new employees is non-existent.

Staff/Professional Development

3.3.6 Employee development is valued by all as a top priority. The focus on quality in the College vision statement is cited as desirable and achievable. There is pride in the professional

courseware and delivery throughout the College. A statement exemplifying this belief was made by a number of faculty: "This is more than just a job."

3.3.7 The managing of employee development exists only in a few pockets where divisional chairmen review project proposals, counsel, and follow up on faculty development.

3.3.8 The budget, lack of funds, or travel restrictions were the main reasons given for lack of visible employee development.

3.3.9 The focus on productivity through student contact hours was cited as the primary driver for college funding, thus limiting choices available for development, and in direct conflict with the concept of quality. Instructional contact hours in excess of 25 hours per week are perceived by some instructors to inhibit effective interaction with the business community.

3.3.10 At King Edward and VVI, a significant portion of the 15 days professional development time is spent on curriculum development.

3.3.11 Temporary replacement of support staff is difficult, particularly in times of restraint, therefore inhibiting their development opportunities.

3.3.12 The VCC staff and faculty are bumped from internal courses by external fee-paying students, leaving the perception that their development is given only lip service.

3.3.13 There is no evidence of support for Recommendation 66 of the Summary Report (professional development committees), although the evaluation system at present does not deal with employee development.

3.3.14 Business and management courses are lacking for those who have supervisory responsibility for staff or faculty.

3.3.15 Human Resources does not have an internal development resource, and has few statistics on employee development.

3.4 Recommendations

3.4.1 In keeping with the vision statement, the College needs direction, planning and purpose in which staff and professional development with dollar allocations are an integral part.

3.4.2 The managing process directed at staff/professional development should be enhanced. Flexibility based on individual need must be evident to faculty and staff. There needs to be a visible commitment to this process to give evidence that behaviour aligns with stated values.

3.4.3 The employee development process should be integrated with the components of a total human resource system, i.e., organization, planning, job specifications, performance standards and objectives, performance evaluation, education and development, succession planning, and staff selection.

3.4.4 The Human Resources Department should be accountable for faculty and staff career counselling as well as ensuring that seats and courses are dedicated for internal needs. Internal cross-training should also be coordinated by this department.

3.4.5 Business and management training should be given to those employees managing faculty or staff.

3.4.6 An orientation guide needs to be developed to ensure each department head or chairman is covering information essential for new employees.

3.4.7 The existing evaluation system needs to be enhanced to include employee development recommendations and follow up by the department head or chairman.

3.4.8 Ultimately, a human resource development policy should be issued as a visible statement of intent and process (see below).

3.5 Human Resource Development Policy - Sample

Policy: It is the policy of Vancouver Community College to provide educational and training opportunities, consistent with College needs, through which employees can acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform their

current or potential future jobs within the institution. The primary focus of this education and training is to build the basic competence required to support the vision and priorities of Vancouver Community College.

4 PROGRAM AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

4.1 Introduction

The primary task of the two members of the Team assigned to this area was to verify that the major issues relating to program and course development and delivery were adequately addressed in the Self Study.

4.2 Method

Team members thoroughly reviewed the documentation provided. Those documents are as follows:

- VCC Institutional Evaluation Report of the Program and Course Development Subcommittee
- The Institutional Evaluation Interim Report, April, 1986
- Final Report of the 1985/86 Institutional Evaluation Steering Committee, July 8, 1986
- Educational Plan Update, September 8, 1986
- Collective Agreements:
  - VCC and Vocational Instructors Association
  - VCC and Langara Faculty Association
  - VCC and Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union
- Individual campus calendars
- Langara - Proposal for new course, program revision or major revision of an existing program
- Telecourse Acquisition Program, 1985/86, Proposal Development Guide
- Colleges and Institutes Act (1979)
- Samples of new program proposals - VVI and K.E. Campus
- President's Vision Statement for VCC.

The Team interviewed staff at all three campus locations:

- all deans of instruction
- all divisional chairpersons
- the President
- Dean of Administration and Student Services, and staff

- Director of College Resources, Director of Instructional Media Services, Coordinator of Telecollege, Coordinator of Institutional Research
- Director of Community Education and program directors
- KEC Curriculum Development Officer
- 19 faculty
- Subcommittee on Program and Course Development.

The following issues were addressed:

- the appropriate match between instructional programs and community needs
- how new needs are identified and met
- the program development process
- the appropriateness of delivery modes.

Additional issues were pursued with those interviewed:

- Has the Self Study addressed all major issues?
- What were the most significant issues identified by the Self Study?
- Are there other significant issues not addressed?

4.3 Findings

Although many findings apply across VCC, it was evident that other findings were definitely campus specific. In those cases the particular campus will be identified.

4.3.1 People who were interviewed agreed that major issues had been addressed by the Self Study. The External Review Team concurs.

4.3.2 The Team supports the development of a VCC vision statement (Recommendations 1-3 of Steering Committee Report), which will provide direction for program planning.

4.3.3 The Team concurs with the Self Study findings that mechanisms for the coordination and provision of services and support for instructional computing need to be reviewed.

4.3.4 The Team supports the need for clarification of the role and range of authority of divisional chairman. Such clarification

will enhance the program development and delivery process. This need was most evident at KEC and VVI.

4.3.5 The Team acknowledges the need for positive administrative support and encouragement to program development initiatives. However, the degree to which this support exists varies from one campus to another. Respondents from Langara indicated that the current process was "clear" and that developments were encouraged and supported within budgetary feasibility. At KEC and VVI,the process was not clearly understood by most faculty or by some department chairpersons, although there is evidently considerable activity in new program development at VVI.

The Team thought it significant that the internal subcommittee on Course and Program Development was not aware of the policy outlining program development procedures. This policy (6.4.1.1) on Program/ Course Documentation: Development, Review and Distribution was approved by the President on November 5, 1985.

4.3.6 The Team observed a lack of awareness of the information available and/or the services available relating to student markets, demand for programs, shifts in training needs, and student satisfaction.

4.3.7 The Team supports the creation of ad hoc project teams to assist in the development and implementation of new programs.

4.3.8 The need for early consultation with Instructional Media Services and Library Services was noted.

4.3.9 Those interviewed indicated that the benefits of P.A.C. involvement in program planning were significant, and therefore the Team concurs with the findings of the subcommittee and with Recommendation 36 of the final report.

4.3.10 The Team concurs with Recommendation 56 of the final report on planning for integration of computing into the curriculum and points out that this need was identified as a high priority at all campuses.

4.4 Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations found in the final report of the Steering Committee, the following observations and/or recommendations are submitted:

4.4.1 The policy and procedures governing program and course development should be widely distributed on all campuses and discussed with all those having responsibilities for program and course development.

4.4.2 The Team concurs with those interviewed and with findings of the internal review which calls for the administration to become more proactive in program planning, budgeting, implementation, and evaluation. Where necessary, assistance should be provided to administrators to develop additional skills in this area.

4.4.3 The Team observed significant moves for campus autonomy. This approach negates the effective use of limited college resources in the areas of new program and course development. The Team therefore recommends that cross-campus cooperation be encouraged where there are advantages to be gained from shared experience, expertise, objectives and resources.

4.4.4 It is recommended that ad hoc project teams for program development include representation from both IMS and Library Services.

4.4.5 The Team recommends that the services and information available from the Office of Institutional Research be more widely publicized and more effectively utilized at the program planning level.

4.5 Commendations

4.5.1 The Team commends the staff at VCC (all campuses) on their belief in and commitment to the College. Despite being in a period of economic restraint, staff members have attempted to address the need for program development. Courses and programs have continued to be updated in an effort to meet current student and community needs.

4.5.2 Physical facilities have been fully utilized in a creative fashion to allow for increased student enrolments and additional programs.

5 RELATIONS WITH THE EXTERNAL COMMUNITY

5.1 Introduction

This section of the External Review examines the relation of VCC to the external community from the perspective of what that relationship is perceived to be at this point, and more importantly, the kind of relationship the College should be seeking to develop with its various constituencies.

5.2 Method

The approach used to address this question was to review existing materials provided by the institution and then to interview members of advisory committees, staff, faculty, and students of the three campuses, plus one individual from the Vancouver School Board. The focus of these interviews centred around the subject areas covered in the internal study report.

5.3 Findings

As a preface to any further action directed at improving external relations, it is strongly urged that the role of VCC and the specific identity and functions of the three campuses within that corporate identity be clearly defined and communicated to both the College's internal and external communities. There is a clear need to determine what the unique role of each of the three campuses will be, and how those roles relate to the whole operation, before further attempts are made to develop a marketing strategy.

The following observations, based on the interviews conducted, substantiate the work of the subcommittee which reviewed this topic as part of the Self Study.

5.3.1 Cooperative Education: The findings of the subcommittee are strongly supported.

5.3.2 Contract Work:

(a) Local contracts should be pursued, with new procedures developed to provide quicker response time to the marketplace.

(b) International contracts appear to be well underway; there is an optimistic outlook and growth is indicated. However,

there is concern that this growth could have a negative impact on the College if not handled carefully.

5.3.3 Program advisory committees are functioning reasonably well in some areas, poorly in others. On the whole, the Team feels these committees are not being utilized to their full potential.

5.3.4 The common indication throughout all interviews was that internal procedures for implementing new ideas are cumbersome and rigid and response time much too slow, with the result that opportunities are being lost.

5.3.5 Collaboration with industry and community groups: This area should be adequately covered by the full utilization of program advisory committees.

5.3.6 Visibility of the Senior Administration and Board in the Community: The Team could discover no consensus on what form people felt this visibility should take, or what the desired effect of greater visibility would be; however, the perception prevails that both the Board and senior administration are not particularly visible.

5.3.7 Image of the College in the Community: There was a common perception on the part of those interviewed that the image VCC projects to all areas of the community is less than satisfactory. In some instances, complete ignorance of what the College is and does abounds; in others, such as some segments of the business community where the College is known and recognized as a major educational institution, there is misunderstanding of the kinds of services it offers. The College's "image in the community" appears to be blurred at best, and this, of course, emphasizes the need for the institution to define its role more clearly and to decide how, where and when to market its diverse offerings and services.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 New procedures to facilitate quicker response time in meeting emerging training needs should be developed.

5.4.2 Activity in the area of international contracts should be carefully monitored to ensure that positive gains will be realized by the College and that students in the College's regular programs are not adversely affected by a reallocation of resources or over-extended support services.

5.4.3 College endorsement of the subcommittee's proposals on how program advisory committees could be more effectively utilized is recommended.

5.4.4 A task force should be struck, as suggested by the subcommittee, to address and plan how VCC's image in the community might be improved in its various constituencies.

5.5 Commendations

The work of the Self Study subcommittee in preparing its report, and the Steering Committee in its overall assessment of the situation, is to be commended. The College is well aware of the problems and challenges it faces in this area and has already begun to take positive action.

6 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

6.1 Introduction

This section addresses the topic of internal communication. The objective was to evaluate the quality, quantity and process of communication--both vertically and horizontally--within the College.

6.2 Method

Definition was given to the topic by dividing internal communication into two broad topics: information required to perform one's job professionally (need to know), and information which one would like to have for interest, expanded knowledge, or curiosity (like to know).

Interviews were held with 34 employees representing management, faculty, students and unions at the three campuses of VCC. Although one-on-one interviews predominated, "drop in" sessions allowed for a variety of interested employees to contribute their comments and suggestions.

6.3 Findings

6.3.1 Generally, individuals at all levels felt they had adequate information and communication to perform their specific job function. Variations tended to be of a qualitative and minor nature, and were fairly infrequent. Further, this information tended to be limited to each campus and information sharing between campuses may be described as very limited.

6.3.2 The Self Study recommendation on communication addressed improvements on the quality and procedure of meetings as an important feature. In the opinion of the Team, the emphasis placed on meetings as the primary communication method is having a deleterious effect on information sharing. The need to attend many meetings to represent or protect "one's interest" on all fronts was described over and over. It may be that the advent of change within the organization, brought about by restraint, senior management changes, and the resulting competition for available resources, has created an insecurity which

has manifested itself as a need or concern to be kept informed of virtually everything.

6.3.3 Many examples were provided of funding allocation, redistribution, or discontinuation without consultation with the affected unit and without follow up communication.

6.3.4 The defined role of department head and division chairperson is such that retaining both within the bargaining unit is perceived by the Team to be negating their usefulness as management. This is not to say many individuals are not performing outstandingly in these roles, but by definition the role is in conflict. The result is that the first line management role within the teaching organization is that of Dean. The effort is, therefore, a span of control of some 50-90 employees, which is not feasible. Serious problems in communication appear to result from this situation.

6.3.5 The College appears to have responded to financial restraint by centralizing decision making into the core of administrative and senior management ranks. The obvious advantage of quick response and centralization of tough decisions has created an opposing problem. Faculty and staff express concern over loss of authority, participation, recognition, and ultimately, trust with those who changed the rules.

6.3.6 The College's financial reporting system is felt to be very good. Information regarding the current status of expenditures and revenue is available as required. Concern was expressed that the advent of restraint has limited or eliminated the budget planning component. To this end, budgets are allocated and distributed in isolation. Communication in this important area of financial planning was felt to be imperative.

6.3.7 A wide variety of print communication exists. These include campus house organs, student papers, department and division publications, memoranda, bulletins, and minutes of meetings. These are felt to be generally satisfactory. A periodic need

to evaluate and modify or update exists, and should be done on an ongoing basis.

6.3.8 A further point regarding print material is that much valued information is available; however, access to it or knowledge of it is limited. Further, redundancy of information storage is evident.

6.3.9 A clear expression that communication is poorer the farther away one is from the President was evident. This perception is understandable and not unique to VCC. Additional mechanisms to improve communication were suggested during the interviews. These ideas include a "suggestion program," giving recognition for good ideas; and periodic President or Principal's breakfasts, lunches or drop-in sessions whereby cross-sections of employees could meet informally and share information with senior management.

6.3.10 Communication flow between campuses was generally felt to be very limited. A great deal of organizational energy is being expended attempting to rationalize the centralization or decentralization of VCC. Advocates of each viewpoint expressed concern that the lack of clarity surrounding this issue is having a negative impact on internal communication.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Senior management should commence a process of delegation of authority and increased participation to those employees who are entrusted to perform the primary management functions of the institution. This action over time will greatly increase the quality of decisions made within the College, will enhance the participation of the management roles, and will create time for senior management to emphasize their planning responsibilities.

6.4.2 The College administration should enhance the financial planning process to ensure opportunities for input in the development of departmental and program budgets.

6.4.3 Consideration should be given to developing a brief information guide to direct new and current employees to where routine information is located and available.

6.4.4 To facilitate broadening communication, consideration should be given to implementing programs or mechanisms which offer additional methods of improving internal communication.

6.4.5 The College should develop a clear statement of purpose or intent regarding the planned roles for VCC at each campus, and communicate this statement of purpose to the internal and external college communities.

7 PLANNING, MANAGING AND DECISION MAKING

7.1 Introduction

Four members of the Team were assigned to review the Self Study component which addressed the planning, managing and decision making functions of the College within the larger framework of administrative functions.

7.2 Method

Over a two-and-one-half day period the Team consulted with members of both the Self Study Steering Committee and the Planning, Management, and Decision Making Subcommittee, the VCC President, leaders of the two faculty associations, two principals, members of the College Executive Committee, several deans, numerous divisional and departmental chairmen, several faculty, the Board chairman, some staff and some students--an approximate total of eighty individuals. Interviewees were selected to provide adequate representation of central administration and the campuses as well as representatives of both administrative and educational services.

These consultations, generally in the form of interviews arranged at the request of Team members, but sometimes occasioned by a request from a VCC employee, were designed to test the validity of the Self Study.

At the outset, questions and the ensuing discussion focused on the Self Study process, the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the Self Study Report, and the possible means by which the recommendations of the Report could be affected. Additionally, the Team members attempted to elicit from VCC employees the key issues confronting the College from among the array of seventy-three recommendations, as well as any other issues which had not in their view emerged from the Self Study.

Over time, the Team's consultations became focused as there emerged broad themes which encapsulated the recommendations of the Self Study.

7.3 Findings

This final section deals with the overall administration and management of the institution and thus encompasses and re-emphasizes many of the observations in earlier sections of this report.

7.3.1 The Team notes that the VCC community has since the issuance of the Self Study Report begun to implement many of the recommendations.

7.3.2 The Team further notes that VCC is a college with outstanding human resources and excellent instructional programs. The Team found a large cadre of faculty and administrators who recognize the substantive problems of the College and who are prepared to confront them collectively, cooperatively and effectively. A high level of morale was apparent, as was a notable absence of cynicism or alienation.

7.3.3 College Identity:

Although VCC has existed as a single organizational entity since 1965, the structure of a single college was imposed upon several disparate institutions. Historically and to this day the College's three campuses have remained autonomous, in large measure because of the uniqueness of their programs and student populations. The Team finds that a corporate identity is not extant within either the college community or the metropolitan community.

7.3.4 College Organization and Governance:

There is a lack of consensus within the College and among the campuses about the role of central administration vis-à-vis the campuses with respect to the centralization of services, policy making and program coordination. Furthermore, there is no consensus as to where authority should rest to make independent and autonomous decisions which affect campus operations.

7.3.5 Planning: The Team finds that operational concerns have preempted effective strategic and long-range planning at the college level.

7.3.6 Decision making:

The College administration has been preoccupied with day-to-day operational concerns, which frequently necessitate making reactive rather than proactive kinds of decisions. The Team finds that this operational decision making has not involved

those individuals whose role and function are vitally affected by these decisions.

7.3.7 Management Development:

The Team finds that individuals, including faculty, who are assigned administrative responsibilities, are often unprepared to perform the responsibilities in their roles. This observation pertains to all administrative levels among both junior and senior administrators. While administrators or managers express a desire and willingness to receive management training, no formal, organized program of management development exists.

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 The VCC Board needs to initiate a college identity program which promotes a corporate identity and within that a distinct identity for each of the campuses.

7.4.2 The VCC Board should establish policies and guidelines with respect to the centralization of support services and the decentralization of authority to campuses in educational matters. Intercampus links should be established at appropriate levels to achieve coordination of programs and service delivery.

7.4.3 The President should review existing planning activities and establish effective processes which provide for the involvement of appropriate members of the college community, including those who will be called upon to implement the plans.

7.4.4 The President and campus Principals should review policies and practices regarding operationalizing decisions and take action to ensure that authority is delegated to, and decisions are made, at appropriate levels of central and campus organizational structures. Part of this review should involve examination of the administrative and management roles throughout the institution, including the potential advantages of removing divisional chairmen from the bargaining unit.

7.4.5 The President should take action to establish a program which will facilitate management development for all levels and which will provide incentives for participation.

7.4.6 The VCC Board should affirm the importance of the Self Study and the concomitant evaluation process. The Board should actively review efforts taken by the administration to accomplish the recommendations of the Self Study.

7.5 Commendations

7.5.1 All members of the VCC community should be commended for their support of, or active involvement in, the Self Study process and their willingness to discuss their concerns openly with the External Team.

7.5.2 The President should be commended for action taken to date with respect to the recommendations, particularly Recommendations 1 and 2 regarding creating a context in which constructive, participatory planning can occur.

SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The College should address the needs indicated in the Review findings relating to the "Access" issue, prioritize the appropriate actions, adopt a schedule of implementation, and make the plan known throughout the College.
2. Procedures to implement regular faculty, staff and administrator evaluation (Recommendations 45-47) should be initiated, but with considerable planning and attention to differences among campuses.
3. Procedures for employee evaluation should be clearly aimed at the improvement of performance and therefore should be related to recommendations regarding staff development and deployment.
4. Revised procedures for program evaluation should be clearly communicated to all departments and should be implemented. This process should be monitored, perhaps by the Verification Committee, to determine its effectiveness.
5. Greater efforts should be made to recognize the value of support staff contributions to the College.
6. In keeping with the vision statement, the College needs direction, planning and purpose in which staff and professional development with dollar allocations are an integral part.
7. The managing process directed at staff/professional development should be enhanced. Flexibility based on individual need must be evident to faculty and staff. There needs to be a visible commitment to this process to give evidence that behaviour aligns with stated values.
8. The employee development process should be integrated with the components of a total human resource system, i.e., organization, planning, job specifications, performance standards and objectives, performance evaluation, education and development, succession planning, and staff selection.
9. The Human Resources Department should be accountable for faculty and staff career counselling as well as ensuring seats and courses are dedicated for internal needs. Internal cross-training should also be coordinated by this department.

10. Business and management training should be given to those employees managing faculty or staff.
11. An orientation guide needs to be developed to ensure each department head or chairman is covering information essential for new employees.
12. The existing evaluation system needs to be enhanced to include employee development recommendations and follow up by the department head or chairman.
13. Ultimately, a human resource development policy should be issued as a visible statement of intent and process.
14. The policy and procedures governing program and course development should be widely distributed on all campuses and discussed with all those having responsibilities for program and course development.
15. Administrators should be encouraged to become much more proactive in the whole process of program planning, budgeting, implementation and evaluation. Where necessary, assistance should be provided to administrators to develop additional skills in this area.
16. The Team recommends that cross-campus cooperation in the area of program development be encouraged where there are advantages to be gained from shared experience, expertise, objectives and resources.
17. It is recommended that ad hoc project teams for program development include representation from both IMS and Library Services.
18. The Team recommends that the services and information available from the Office of Institutional Research be more widely publicized and more effectively utilized at the program planning level.
19. New procedures to facilitate quicker response time in meeting emerging training needs should be developed.
20. Activity in the area of international contracts should be carefully monitored to ensure that positive gains will be realized by the College and that students in the College's regular programs are not adversely affected by a reallocation of resources or over-extended support services.
21. College endorsement of the subcommittee's proposals on how program advisory committees could be more effectively utilized is recommended.
22. A task force should be struck, as suggested by the subcommittee, to address and plan how VCC's image in the community might be improved in its various constituencies.

23. Senior management should commence a process of delegation of authority and increased participation to those employees who are entrusted to perform the primary management functions of the institution.
24. The College administration should enhance the financial planning process to ensure opportunities for input in the development of departmental and program budgets.
25. Consideration should be given to developing a brief information guide to direct new and current employees to where routine information is located and available.
26. To facilitate broadening communication, consideration should be given to implementing programs or mechanisms which offer additional methods of improving internal communication.
27. The College should develop a clear statement of purpose or intent regarding the planned roles for VCC at each campus, and communicate this statement of purpose to the internal and external college communities.
28. As a follow up to the action recommended in 27, the VCC Board should initiate a college identity program which promotes a corporate identity and within that a distinct identity for each of the campuses.
29. The VCC Board should establish policies and guidelines with respect to the centralization of support services and the decentralization of authority in educational matters. Intercampus links should be established at appropriate levels to achieve coordination of programs and service delivery.
30. The President should review existing planning activities and establish effective processes which provide for the involvement of appropriate members of the college community, including those who will be called upon to implement the plans.
31. The President and campus Principals should review policies and practices regarding operationalizing decisions and take action to ensure that authority is delegated to, and decisions are made at, appropriate levels of central and campus organizational structures. Part of this review should involve examination of the administrative and management roles throughout the institution, including the potential advantages of removing divisional chairmen from the bargaining unit.

32. The President should take action to establish a program which will facilitate management development and which will provide incentives for participation.
33. The VCC Board should affirm the importance of the Self Study and the concomitant evaluation process. The Board should actively review efforts taken by the administration to accomplish the recommendations of the Self Study.

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges NOV 04 1988